DEUTSCHE AFRIKA-LINIEN
JOHN T. ESSBERGER

news

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John T. Essberger orders two + four 13,000 dwt chemical tankers in China

On 6 September 2024, the last of four 7,135 dwt chemical tankers built for John T. Essberger was christened "John T. Essberger" after the company's founder (see below). Anyone who thought that the celebrations to mark the shipping company's 100th anniversary had reached their climax was surprised on 23 September by the news that John T. Essberger is continuing to invest in the renewal and expansion of the fleet immediately.

At the Rainbow shipyard in Nantong, China, on the outskirts of Shanghai, JTE ordered two state-of-the-art 13,000 dwt chemical tankers with 1A ice class and stainless steel tanks, with an option for four more newbuildings. The vessels can carry almost twice as much as the last tankers delivered from China. Their engines are designed to also run on green versions of methanol. Safety, fuel efficiency and environmental protection

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Chemical Tanker "John T. Essberger" leaving the port of Hamburg passing the famous Elbphilharmonie music hall

A Ship named "John T. Essberger"

The weather on 6 September could not have been better. The "John T. Essberger" (7,135 dwt) moored in the port of Hamburg and christened at the Hamburg Cruise Centre Baakenhafen. Captain Jaroslav Spors and his crew welcomed the guests on their ship, which was flagged over the topsides. In contrast to the previous double christening on 21 June, which also marked the centenary of John T. Essberger, this time only the von Rantzau family and employees of the shipping company were present. Three guests of honour should not go unmentioned: Ruben Mangold, Christian Wieser and Dr Christian Müller represented the Swiss UBS banking group, which contributed significantly to the construction costs with its loans. The day was therefore more of a "family celebration" than an official event. It has been a tradition since the founding of the shipping company that the Essberger ships bear the first names of family members. For the very first time, a ship was named after the founder of the shipping company, John

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The latest highlight of the JTE centennial was the signing of the new contract to build 2 + 4 chemical tankers, a step further into the future of JTE. At 13,000 dwt, the planned newbuildings will be the largest vessels in the Essberger fleet. With their 18 stainless steel tanks, they will allow E&S Tankers more flexibility in operation. The ships fulfil all current climate protection requirements. The engines are ready to run on methanol as soon as sufficient supply is ensured.

The preliminary FKAB design studies show that this series of tankers will be very energy efficient. Prior to the commencement of the construction, the hull lines will be further optimised to maximise the efficiency.

Our investment comes at a time when shipyard capacities are heavily utilised worldwide and construction prices are high. The shipyard we have chosen, Rainbow near Shanghai, has no previous experience in building chemical tankers but is familiar with stainless steel components as proven in the construction of other types of state-of-the art vessels. Thus, our employees from Essberger Shipmanagement will closely monitor the construction progress on site and give their input of experience.

This is a good opportunity to expressly thank the Essberger team headed by Johan Isaksen for their great commitment shown in the construction process of the last four China ships. The team had to endure great personal hardships in a very challenging time, keyword Covid-19 and in a very remote location. But they never lost sight of the goal.

Let's hope that our new project will also be a success.

Yours, Heinrich von Rantzau

13,000 dwt newbuildings expected in April 2017 designed to run on green versions of methanol

Signing ceremony at Rainbow Shipyard with Johan Isaksen of Essberger Shipmanagement and Malte Willer of Essberger Tankers in the front row. Dejan Golub of Essberger Shipmanagement is in the back row third from the right

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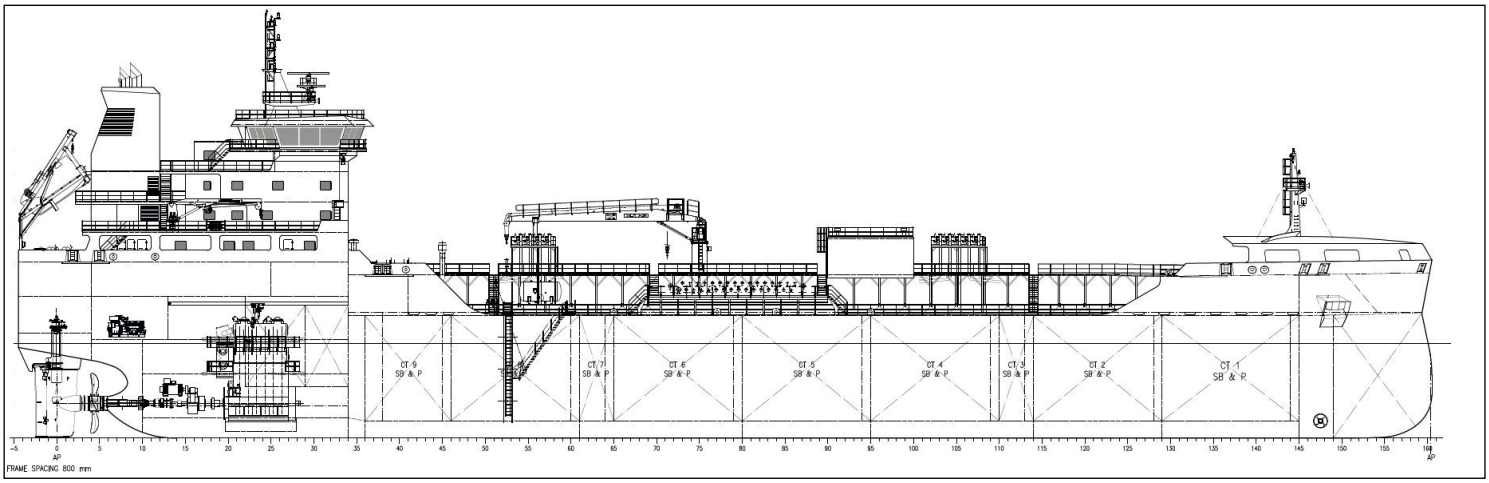
meet the high standards of the Essberger fleet.

As part of the E&S pool with our Norwegian partner Stolt Nielsen from the Essberger office, the newbuilds will primarily be deployed in the North Sea and Baltic Sea, replacing ageing tankers. The first Rainbow ship is scheduled for completion in April 2027.

The signing of the contract under the supervision of Johan Isaksen (Essberger Shipmanagement) was preceded by an extensive exploration of suitable shipyards. In particular, the handling of stainless steel for the construction of the tanks requires special experience. As shipyard capacities are heavily utilised worldwide, the search for a suitable shipyard was a major challenge. The contract was finally awarded to Rainbow Shipyard on the Yangtze River, a smaller shipyard that had previously primarily been building large stainless steel cylindrical pressure tanks for LNG and ammonia. The shipyard is currently expanding its shipbuilding capabilities. With the help of Essberger Shipmanagement's extensive experience in building state-of-the-art chemical tankers and close cooperation, quality will be guaranteed.

The specifications:
Length overall: 132.0 m
Breadth: 21.8 m
Draught: 8.8 m
Deadweight: 13,000 tonnes
Engine type: MAN 6G45ME-C9.7-HPSCR
Power: 5,400 kW



Rendering vision of Rainbow Tanker type and graphic version of the design plan

Christening party. The Rantzau family: Christian & Nofretete with Vito & Elena, Dr Eberhart & Patricia, Caroline, Annette, Philipp and Heinrich with Capt Spors & CE Szyca

In new uniforms: CE Szyca, 3E Glab, OS Reginio. AB Amurao, DCDT Kubacki, Capt Spors, CO Eriskin, MTM Pantaleon, 2O Cabial, 2E Dimancea, Elec Suteanu, CCK Soriano

Naming ceremony "John T. Essberger"

(continued from page 1)

T. Essberger (1896–1959), on this bright summer's day. Patricia von Rantzau took matters into her own hands as godmother of the new-building. She is the wife of John T.'s grandson and successor Dr Eberhart von Rantzau. Their son Philipp von Rantzau, who is currently still training as a shipping specialist, welcomed the guests. Then came the actual christening ceremony. To the applause of the guests, the champagne foamed from the burst bottle at the bow.

Many then took advantage of the invitation to the open ship and marvelled at the modern technology from the engine room to the bridge – and those who wanted to were also allowed to make the typhoon roar.

But the real celebration was only about to begin. A large marquee had been erected in the park at the von Rantzau family's White House on Elbchaussee in Hamburg-Blankenese. A sumptuous buffet followed by live music and a disco awaited the guests. Heinrich von Rantzau welcomed the guests here. His speech included the following:

"I can't remember a time when we had a party here at the White House to which the entire staff was invited. In the days of John T. Essberger, christenings were always a very family-orientated event. Today, 29 chemical tankers bear the Essberger name on their bows, and that is by no means the end of the story. Fortunately, there are plenty of offspring in the family, so we won't run out of names for the time being."

"My brother and I took today's christening as an opportunity to celebrate this day in person with all the employees of the shipping company family. Within the family, so to speak."

"I am particularly pleased that you, dear Captain Spors, and you, dear Mr Szyca, are wearing your tailor-made uniforms this evening. You and all your colleagues, whom you also represent, can be really proud of this and, as I have heard on various occasions, they are really proud. There were hardly any uniforms after our mother's time. Back then, uniforms were even worn on board sometimes, at least when the boss came."

The return of the uniform

As only a few employees are unfamiliar with the White House, which was built in 1769 for a Hamburg merchant, Heinrich von Rantzau gave a brief outline of the history of the family seat:

"When John T. and his wife Elsa took over the house almost a hundred years ago, it was completely rundown. The location played a special role in the purchase. Back then, there was still an unobstructed view of the Elbe. Every Essberger ship that sailed past was greeted with waving bed sheets. The captain responded with the typhoon." "Elsa Essberger, who was an avid art collector, and her husband with his musical streak – he was good at playing the violin – restored the house in an exemplary manner. When Elsa wanted to buy a new painting, mainly now highly valuated French Impressionists, the thrifty John T. compared the purchase price with the daily cost of one of his ships. At the time, this was around 800 Reichsmarks. And if it wasn't too high a multiple, he probably usually agreed. From today's perspective, I can only say that thank God Elsa Essberger was very assertive. Even her husband later admitted that he made some of the luckiest decisions of his life back then."

At the end of the official part of the evening, he presented the guest of honour, godmother Patricia von Rantzau, with the traditional christening gift – a golden bracelet in the shape of an anchor chain. Finally, Patricia von Rantzau thanked everybody involved in the construction of the new vessel. Then the music took over.

Speaker Heinrich v Rantzau points at the present given to godmother Patricia

Post-naming party in the park of the family estate in Hamburg

Dinner and dance for the employees in the marquee

Swantje Osthoff with Gerlind Heinemann

Ryszard Topolewski and Valerijs Drozdovich

Tina Döscher, Katrin Kähler, Nicole Hildebrand

Christian Wieser and Ruben Mangold (UBS) with Dr Ricardo Alvarez (middle)

Sarah Kalleicher, Dirk Kornblum, Gundula Grzybowski and Gotthard Igla

Ina Schulte, Andrea Bendik, Silke Steinfurt

Paul Röpe, Kristof Kück with Henrik Bahnsen

Mark Konrad, Andreas Bendlin and Bernd Schlarmann

Duckdalben – service for the soul

More than 30,000 seafarers visit the seamen's club in Hamburg harbour every year. However, the centre is under financial pressure due to rising costs

Jörn Hille is a bear of a man and has been a sailors' deacon and head of the Christian seamen's club "Duckdalben" in the port of Hamburg for two years. Eliane Lafendt has been at his side as a commercially savvy co-manager since September 2024. The "Duckdalben" is a Christian institution and its hospitality is internationally recognised as unique among seafarers. The only person standing between the two managing directors of the "Duckdalben" and the good Lord is Carolyn Decke, who bears overall responsibility as Provost of the Harburg church district. All three are united by their concern for money.

Eliane Lafendt manages the club internally and endeavours to make ends meet with donations from the church, the Hamburg Port Authority, shipping companies, private donations, income from the club kiosk and fundraising activities. Occasionally an inheritance helps to overcome shortages. However, the contributions from the church and the city do not take into account inflation and the rapid rise in the cost of living. What's more, income is falling, as the number of shipping companies has decreased significantly since the shipping crisis. As a result, the 25 employees currently on permanent contracts are increasingly being put on short-time work. Without the seven helpers who are completing a voluntary social year at Duckdalben and the more than 100 voluntary helpers and part-time volunteers, the Duckdalben regular crew would hardly be able to do the work. On average, around 90 seafarers knock on the club's door every day. Not only do they find a sympathetic ear and a place of worship where all major faiths have a place, but also practical help: everything they need to get in touch with their family after a long journey, or simply an address to store their Amazon order until it can be collected. And that from 10 a.m. to 10.30 p.m.

Eliane Lafendt and Jörn Hille run the seamen's club with a warm heart

Seaman deacon Jörn Hille works on the front line. Alongside customs and water police, Hille is one of the first visitors on board an incoming ship. Social work and even crisis intervention are part of the support on board. You can imagine the pastoral and organisational services that were required of the Duckdalben crew during the Covid-19 crisis. World-shaking events such as the war in Ukraine also have an impact on the crews of the ships. Even the mentally robust and worldly-wise deacon reaches his limits. Experienced in the world because the Bremen-born deacon lived abroad for many years and worked as head of the German Seamen's Mission in London. Around 30,000 seafarers are counselled in Hamburg every year, sometimes in eye-to-eye meetings. The Duckdalben has been voted the world's favourite seamen's club several times. The institution has long been a legend, even beyond the maritime world. In Hamburg, the Duckdalben is considered a tourist attraction. Every day, groups of visitors stop here on their harbour tour, passengers from cruise ships as well as carnival clubs from the Rhine. Jörn Hille has two wishes: better funding for the club, that goes without saying, and a regular dialogue with those responsible in the shipping companies.

What you should know are the bank details: IBAN: DE37 5206 0410 0006 4079 35, the address Zellmannstraße 16, 21129 Hamburg (next to the Eurokai terminal), the freephone number 0800-38 25 32 52, and the telephone number +49 40 740 1661 *(seeyou@duckdalben.de and www.duckdalben.de).*

Precision and passion – the photographic artists of John T. Essberger

The Essberger anniversary book, the latest special edition of DAL/JTE News, Christmas cards, advertising and calendar photos: behind it all are two photographers of great skill. They deliver the colour we need to illustrate what is going on in the Essberger world.

Ortwin Mühr has an eye for ships

Ortwin Mühr, 52, is not a professional photographer, but he has several qualifications that attest to his high level of professionalism. As Head of Nautical Inspection at the Claus-Peter Offen shipping company and as a long-time captain of the largest container ships, he has a maritime-trained eye and an artistic eye that is quite unusual compared to the many hobby shipspotters. His technical affinity is reflected in his extensive equipment (Sony), including a drone, of course. Curiosity, precision, passion and the professional opportunity to spend a lot of time with and on ships make Ortwin Mühr an exceptional figure in the maritime world. He has two children and lives with his family in Hollern-Twielenfleth on the river Elbe – within sight of the Essberger tankers that pass by here. And when he's on duty his son Matthis represents him.

Michael Zapf, 59, on the other hand, has been a professional photographer for almost 40 years. After many years working for daily newspapers (Hamburger Abendblatt) and photo agencies, he now works freelance for press offices, companies and politics like the Hamburg Senate. He is in demand as a North German landscape and milieu photographer, especially for book productions. His many publications include the bestseller "Elbchaussee – People and Houses on Hamburg's Great Road". An important subject area is his portrait and social photography. In addition to his professional eye, Michael Zapf has a friendly, reserved and convincing way of dealing with people. He lives with his wife in Hamburg-Bergedorf and has been the in-house photographer for the von Rantzau family and John T. Essberger for many years.

Michael Zapf has an eye for people

Whereabouts

October 2024

Ship name	Master	First Mate	Chief Engineer
Agnes Essberger	Yury Shcherbinkin	Viacheslav Leonov	Piotr Popiel
Amalie Essberger	Jakub Nadaj	Marcin Zietek	Jeremias Cerdenia
Anneliese Essberger	Albertus Linthorst	Pawel Pawlik	Pieter Pasterkamp
Annette Essberger	Waldemar Literski	Maciej Jedrzejczak	Artur Krupa
Birthe Essberger	Jacek Borysiuk	Andrey Kaytukov	Ruslans Lesciks
Caroline Essberger	Chris De Boer	Marcus Klein	Arnoldus Eland
Charlotte Essberger	Andrey Grzhibovskiy	Carl Marx Cidro	Sergey Panishev
Christian Essberger	Robert Szmaj	Marison Tabotabo	Oleksandr Samusenko
Coral Essberger	Paulo Santos	Dariusz Podsiadly	Adam Szwajka
Cuno Essberger	Mariusz Borek	Piotr Czajkowski	Nicolae Boiangiu
Dutch Aquamarine	Thomas Kijzers	Maciej Maciejuniec	Steven Van Royen
Dutch Emerald	Sander De Bos	Sjoerd Rijndorp	Sipke Steenbergen
Eberhart Essberger	Andrei Malenkov	Waldemar Rzepka	Marcin Prena
Ellen Essberger	Adam Incewicz	Dorian Glodowski	Roman Kulish
Elsa Essberger	Stefan Grabowski	Jaroslaw Krok	Sergey Varakin
Georg Essberger	Henryk Bienenstok	Mariusz Piorkowski	Sylwester Leszczynski
Gisela Essberger	Maciej Kaminski	Filip Rajner	Aleksey Plyasukhin
Heinrich Essberger	Dan Tocitu	Rafal Drezno	Volodymyr Yurkevych
Helga Essberger	Daniel Szarzynski	Maksim Naumcik	Olegs Cerepanovs
Johann Essberger	Deniss Tatarinovs	Quirino II Agot	Piotr Trusinski
John Augustus Essberger	Edward Dziduszko	Mateusz Cygan	Alexander Konstantinov
John T. Essberger	Jaroslaw Spors	Piotr Adamski	Andrzej Szyca
Liesel Essberger	Ivo Rubenis	Pedro Janeiro Tavares	Grzegorz Jurkiewicz
Lisa Essberger	Nicolaas Van Den Belt	Paul Gene Galotera	Geert Sap
Liselotte Essberger	Grzegorz Kakol	Mateusz Borysewicz	Stefan Tudorache
Nordic Saga	Menard Responde	Jose Randi III Villanueva	Alexey Zimenkov
Nordic Sira	Harry Reinikka	Ronald Jr. Llanos	Lc Vincent Giuseppe Saul
Nordic Sola	Par Johnsson	Russel Derequito	Vladimir Shapovalov
Nordic Sund	Kent Baregg	Michael Mabunay	Sergiy Gruby
Patricia Essberger	Rafal Garbacz	Evgeniy Buzyrev	Zoran Zambata
Philipp Essberger	Mareks Satkovskis	Antonio Jr. Ocampo	Taras Popov
Roland Essberger	Marcin Madry	Adrian Kuzmicz	Tomasz Kozlowski
Theodor Essberger	Bartosz Selau	Ruslanas Karpovas	Sergei Bondarenko
Ubena	Janusz Urbanski	Rafel Nones	Costica Tuca
Ulanga	Cezary Trzeciakiewicz	Erwin Fanugon	Romeo Roman
Ursula Essberger	Albert Ten Wolde	Patryk Szymanski	Stefan Kluijfhout
Wilhelmine Essberger	Marco Boshuijzen	Koen Stroomberg	Sergey Kokorin

Aus der Reederei-Familie

Jubiläen

25 Jahre

Capt. Andrei Malenkov, 01.08.1999

C/E Stefan Christian Kluijfhout, 15.08.1999

CCK Nilo Notarte Berdin, 05.10.1999

12,5 Jahre

C/E Piotr Turski, 29.03.2012

2/O Cezary Ulrych, 04.04.2012

10 Jahre

Bernd Schlarmann, *Fleet & Project Manager*, 01.08.2014

Besondere Geburtstage

90 Jahre

Hans Peter Sommerhoff, *Pensionär,* 20.09.1934

75 Jahre

Wolfgang Ignorek, *Pensionär,* 10.10.1949

70 Jahre

C/E Leonid Volkov, 26.09.1954

Heide-Lore Jahnke, *Pensionärin,* 14.10.1954

65 Jahre

C/E Steinar Andreas Avloyp, 17.09.1959

David Cutshaw, *Pensionär*, 10.10.1959

60 Jahre

AB Ely Monarca Caballero, 12.08.1964

C/E Arnoldus Adriaan Johannes Eland, 16.08.1964

AB Floro Allan Gumanit Cabatingan, 18.08.1964

C/O Dariusz Stanislaw Podsiadly, 08.09.1964

MTM Cirilo Jr. Tablate Sedillo, 14.09.1964

C/E Jan Pieter Lodder, 23.09.1964

Kirsten Michaelis, *Secretary Facility Management*, 04.10.1964

50 Jahre

C/E Miroslaw Henryk Szylobryt, 31.08.1974

Reda Hamreras, *SSHEQ Superintendent*, 08.09.1974

Capt. Jaroslaw Spors, 17.09.1974

3/O Charlie Falco Huervana, 23.09.1974

PMP Donnie Ortega Ogahayon, 29.09.1974

Katrin Pooch, *Financial Accounting,* 11.10.1974

Neue Mitarbeiter an Land

Henrik Bahnsen, *Ship Management*

Uta Dobisch, *Finance, Tax, Accounting*

Nathalie Petelin, *Sekretariat Heinrich von Rantzau*

Carl von Abendroth, *Auszubildender*

Patrick Horn, *Auszubildender*

Wir gratulieren zur Geburt

Maximilian Schüller,
Tochter Leni Charlotte, 26.09.2024

Thomas Dooley-Varkey,
Tochter Hannah, 27.09.2024

Wir gedenken

Antje Kasch (85 Jahre), August 2024

Kurt Kock (91 Jahre), September 2024

Margot Lühdorff (75 Jahre), September 2024

New responsibilities for Malte Willer and Christian Vang

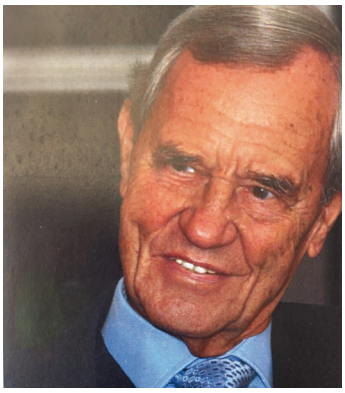
If the news coming from John T. Essberger/E&S Tankers in the anniversary year 2024 are primarily good news, it is mainly thanks to two gentlemen who have taken on special responsibility in new positions this year. Malte Willer, 41, is the new Managing Director of E&S Tankers and Christian Vang, 43, Commercial Director of E&S Tankers.

Malte Willer has worked in the chemical tanker business since 2005, first in Hamburg, then in Switzerland and since 2011 with our partner Stolt Tankers in Rotterdam, where he initially worked as an operator for short and deep sea and most recently as a broker in the Intereuropean service. In 2018, he moved to John T. Essberger's office in Hamburg, where he was responsible for all regions as a broker and later as Commercial Manager of E&S Tankers. In summer 2024, he took over the position of MD from his predecessor Jan Eghoej. Willer says: "Our business is a people business. Since for me 'change equals chance' there is always an opportunity to improve business and myself."

Christian Vang, a native of Copenhagen, also joined JTE in 2004 after completing his training, where he worked for nine years, primarily as a broker in various areas. In 2015, he moved to Paris, where he worked for two years at French shipbroker Barry Rogliano Salles as Head of Chemical Desk in the Brokering department. In 2017, he returned to JTE, where he worked in various positions as an operator and broker, mainly in the spot business. In 2021 he became Commercial Manger (Spot) for E&S Tankers, and in August 2024 he was appointed Commercial Director. Says Vang: "I still get a kick out of fixing a deal for transport of only '1000 mts from A to B' and I am driven by the vision of making the impossible possible."

Malte Willer and Christian Vang are dedicated to John T. Essberger, here in front of the Chemical Tanker "John T. Essberger"

Dieter Seidel †



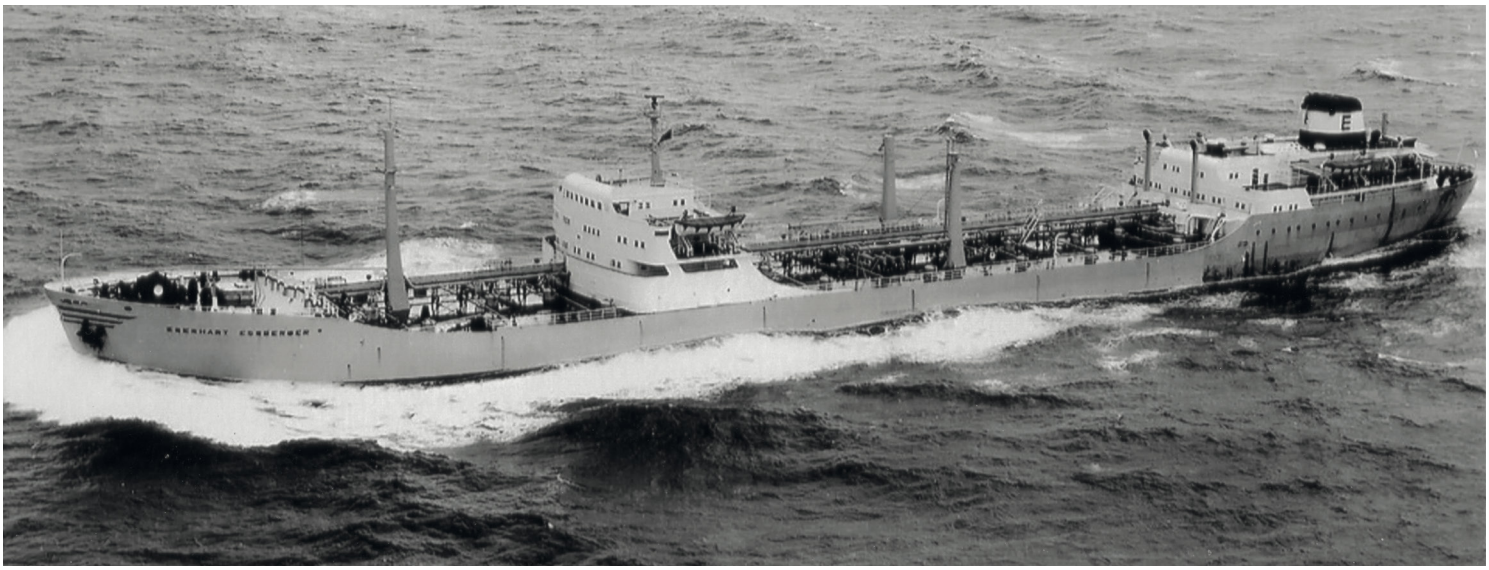
John T. Essberger's West Africa shipping activities were summarised under the name Woermann Line. The history of Woermann Line (WL) goes back to the middle of the 19th century and played an important role in our group of companies in the post-war period. As all West African states gradually gained their independence and the political uncertainties in the region increased, as did the pressure on rates, the West Africa route became uneconomical and was sold to Belgian interested parties on 1 April 1990. In the difficult 1970s and 1980s, Westfahrt was managed by Dieter Seidel. He was a knowledgeable, loyal and prudent managing director and was greatly appreciated by Liselotte von Rantzau. He knew how important WL was in Mrs von Rantzau's heart. But he also knew that this business could not be sustained in the long term. With the sale of the WL, he had to say goodbye to the Palmaille. Dr von Rantzau remembers: "The separation from Dieter Seidel was one of the hardest decisions I had to make in my professional life. He always remained on friendly terms with us." He passed away in July at the age of 92.

Eberhard Stötzner †

With well over 50 years of service to our group of companies, Eberhard Stötzner was one of our most loyal employees. He was a captain in the South Africa trade for many years, where he spent the best part of his life. "I need big steamers under my bum," he said. And he got that here. When DAL's fleet dwindled with container shipping, he switched to the economically prosperous cement trade in the Indian Ocean. After his retirement, he took over the organisation of our shipping company archive. With his enthusiasm for seafaring, his good contacts, especially in South Africa and Namibia, his knowledge and his passion for preserving the maritime history, he succeeded in building up a unique shipping company archive. The fruits of his labour can be found in the book he published "Die Schiffe der Deutschen Afrika-Linien und John T. Essberger" and in the jubilee book celebrating the 100th anniversary of John T. Essberger. After a long illness, which he endured without complaint, Eberhard Stötzner died in July at the age of 86. He was still able to hold the anniversary book in his hands. The archive, now under the management of Jan Mordhorst, will continue to bear his name "Stötzner Archive".

The day the "Eberhart Essberger" was flooded by a tsunami freak wave and how she survived

Essberger exhibition: Former crew member guides visitors of the Hamburg Maritime Museum's special Essberger exhibition and has something to tell/ No sailor's yarn!



Built in 1958 by Deutsche Werft AG, Hamburg, as a crude oil tanker the "Eberhart Essberger" (19,986 dwt) was by no means a small ship. She had a length of 170 metres, a speed of 15 knots, a crew complement of 47 and was employed in the Persian Gulf to Europe trade

The International Maritime Museum Hamburg (IMMH) in HafenCity is showing a small special exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the John T. Essberger shipping company until 10 November 2024. Manfred Hilbeck is one of the museum's volunteers who guide visitors through the museum. He has a special relationship with the Essberger presentation, with a large model of the tanker "Eberhart Essberger" (19,671 dwt, built in 1958). He travelled on board the ship as a sailor in 1964/65 and knows all about work and life on board. He sent us a report from Klaus Schlegel, who travelled on the tanker as 3rd officer in 1963 and experienced a freak wave, a monstrous wave that appeared out of nowhere and caused considerable damage on board. He assured us: no sailor's yarn! Here is his text:

A giant wave was coming from astern

In the first week of April 1963, on the voyage from the Persian Gulf to Wilhelmshaven, fully loaded with crude oil, we were flooded by a giant wave coming from astern in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen at 14 degrees 47'N and 042 degrees 13'E, near the Zubair Islands.

A rumbling noise becoming louder

I had the watch from 20 h to 24 h together with a sailor as lookout: course 328 degrees, speed approx. 13 knots, SE wind astern, force approx. 25 knots (just under Beaufort 6). Sea height 1.5 to 2.0 metres, no sea came on deck.

At 8.40 p.m. I heard a loud rumbling noise that was getting louder and louder. I ran onto the starboard bridge wing. The noise was clearly coming from aft. A huge wave, its breaking crest was clearly recognisable above the funnel and was coming up from aft in slow motion.

Around this time, three members of the engine crew were in the swimming pool, which was set up with a diving board and walkway at the aft edge of the bridge. We used it extensively. It was dismantled in bad weather. I walked around the bridge superstructure and warned the three of them with "Look out, big wave from aft!"

The wave now seemed to be hanging over the stern. Two men followed the warning immediately and shimmied onto the gangway, about 2.5 to 3 metres above the main deck. The third man was undecided. Now the sea caught hold of the stern and lifted it. Nevertheless, green water was immediately visible on the main deck gangways. The third man managed to grab the springboard. He clung on with his arms and legs underneath the board. The sea rolled forwards over the tank deck, constantly breaking. The water was always just below the gangway, surged around the bridge superstructure amidships and then drained over the forecastle. The forecastle was completely flooded. The third man, still hanging on to the springboard, escaped with a fright.

On the captain's orders, I switched on all the deck lighting to see if there was any damage. There was no trace of the swimming pool; the wood, tarpaulin, wires and turnbuckles had disappeared. Even the angle irons welded to the deck for the posts had broken away at the weld seams.

As if nothing had happened

The sea around the ship looked the same as before, as if nothing had happened. The second officer joined us and wanted to know what had happened. He couldn't imagine what had just happened on deck. Only the disappearance of the swimming pool bore witness to the incident. There had been no noticeable movement in the superstructure.

I then went to sea for another 32 years, 25 of them as a captain. I never experienced anything like it again.

(The Zubair archipelago is located in the Red Sea about 50 kilometres west of Yemen. It is of volcanic origin and the area is still tectonically active today. The rumbling mentioned above indicates a seaquake that triggered a tsunami and thus the giant wave).

For more information on the **DAL/JTE Group** please contact Svante Domizlaff, tel: +49 40 38016-611,
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email: contact-dal@rantzau.de or **Essberger & Stolt Tankers** Palmaille 45, 22767 Hamburg, tel: +49 40 38016-0, email: chartering@es-tankers.com